

## 2010 AFRICA MARITIME SAFETY AND SECURITY TOWARDS ECONOMIC PROSPERITY CONFERENCE PODCAST

October 13th, 2010  
Stuttgart, Germany



(U.S. AFRICOM photo by Daniel P. Lapierre)



(U.S. AFRICOM photo by Claude Dixon)

Podcast featuring Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs Johnnie Carson and African Union Commission Deputy Chairperson Erastus Mwencha on maritime security, good governance, and piracy.

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### Transcript :

**Narrator:** The U.S. Africa Command hosted the 2010 Africa Maritime Safety and Security Towards Economic Prosperity Conference in Stuttgart, Germany on October 13th and 14th. This international conference was co-sponsored by Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs Johnnie Carson and Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for African Affairs Vicki Huddleston and featured African Union Deputy Chairperson Erastus Mwencha.

**Narrator:** In talking about U.S. and Africa mutual interests, Assistant Secretary Carson emphasized that maritime security is an area where the U.S. and Africa have interests that converge and overlap.

**Ambassador Carson:** Those interests include fostering sustained economic growth and development, ensuring free movement of goods on the strategically important transportation corridors off the African coast, protecting the environment, maintaining port security and infrastructure, preventing illegal fishing, and protecting offshore oil and gas installations. All of these things are of importance to Africa. They are of equal importance to the United States and also to the global community. Therefore we find that today's conference gives us an opportunity to promote greater collaboration and cooperation in helping to ensure that African countries can realize the greatest benefits from their resources, from the sea, and also where we can work with African countries to protect those coastal and maritime resources from being exploited illegally.

**Narrator:** Deputy Chairperson Mwencha further highlighted Africa's opportunities and challenges.

**Deputy Chairperson Mwencha:** For us in Africa this is a subject of great importance because as you know the coastline of Africa is about 39,000 kilometers. Now that poses an opportunity and a challenge. An opportunity because in that coastline lies great wealth, in which Africa is only getting a small portion. Often we only get to hear about hijacking and piracy, but that's not all about the coastline of Africa. The coastline of Africa is about trade; it is about food security; it is about energy; it is about human trafficking

and it is also about toxic waste. But above all it is about governance for the continent and the wealth of the continent.

**Narrator:** The U.S. Africa Command hosted the 2010 Africa Maritime Safety and Security Conference in Stuttgart, Germany on October 13 and 14. Led by AFRICOM Commander General William Ward, this international conference featured Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs Johnnie Carson, of African Union Deputy Chairperson Erastus Mwencha, and Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense Vicki Huddleston.

**Narrator:** In talking about the role of AFRICOM, Assistant Secretary Carson emphasized that the United States views African nations as partners in assuring international peace and security.

**Ambassador Carson:** African states are sovereign, African states have a responsibility to protect their natural resources; they have a responsibility to protect their people. It is not the responsibility of the U.S. government to do this. The U.S. government can offer collaboration, cooperation, and assistance to individual African states, and it can also work together with important regional organizations like the African Union, which we are doing here in this conference. We can only play an important secondary and sometimes tertiary role, but we have no responsibilities and certainly have no intent of injecting ourselves into the protection of these assets.

**Narrator:** Deputy Chairperson Mwencha agreed with Secretary Carson. He stressed that African nations have to help each other and work in concert with the international community.

**Deputy Chairperson Mwencha :** This is a global problem, and we can only have global solutions. But for Africa, we have to do something for ourselves. We have developed and we're developing a strategy, that strategy has the responsibility to at the individual level, at the national level, and at the intercontinental level. That strategy requires that first of all we share information, we coordinate, we work together within the continent and we have our coastlines policed and a safeguarded from international pirates, but also those that do illegal fishing, toxic waste, and the rest. That requires resources to do that, and that is an element that we also seek to partner with the rest of the international community to help each other to be able to tackle the problem.

**Narrator:** Assistant Secretary Carson commented the international community and African nations must all do more to confront piracy.

**Ambassador Carson:** Piracy in the Red sea off the coast of Somalia is global problem and international issue. Piracy continues to persist for two reasons: one is the lack of a government and an economy on shore, and the other one is absence of impunity, the continuation of impunity and the absence of punishment for people who are caught engaged in piracy. It is important that the international community come forward, that countries in and around the globe that own these ships, that provide crews for these ships, that flag these ships, take responsibility for punishing the pirates that are engaged in the piracy.

**Narrator:** We reached the end of our podcast featuring Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs Johnnie Carson, and African Union Deputy Chairperson Erastus Mwencha. Thank you for listening to this Africa Regional Services podcast.